CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (original): A method to identify a desired region of a target nucleic acid to be targeted for observation, which method comprises

contacting said nucleic acid with first and second identification probes, which probes comprise first and second oligomers specific for the upstream and downstream sequences bracketing said region respectively,

wherein said first oligomer is coupled to a first particulate label and said second oligomer is coupled to a second particulate label and wherein said particulate labels are observable by microscopy.

2. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said first and second particulate labels comprise fluorophores.

3. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said first and second labels are different.

4. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said first and second oligomers are peptide nucleic acids.

5. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said target nucleic acid is single-stranded and said first and second oligomers are complementary to the upstream and downstream sequences bracketing said region.

6. (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said target nucleic acid is double-stranded and said first and second oligomers form triplexes with said upstream and downstream sequences bracketing said region.

7. (original): The method of claim 1, which is performed simultaneously on a multiplicity of target nucleic acids using a multiplicity of identification probes having particulate

labels of differing hues coupled to oligomers comprising sequences complementary to a multiplicity of said upstream and downstream sequences bracketing a multiplicity of such regions.

8. (original): A method to detect the presence of a target nucleic acid of known sequence, which method comprises

contacting said nucleic acid with at least first and second identification probes, which probes comprise first and second oligomers specific for proximal nucleotide sequences of said nucleic acid,

wherein said first oligomer is coupled to a first particulate label and said second oligomer is coupled to a second particulate label and wherein said particulate labels are observable by microscopy.

9. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said first and second particulate labels comprise fluorophores.

10. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said first and second labels are the same.

11. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said first and second oligomers are peptide nucleic acids.

12. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said target nucleic acid is single-stranded and said first and second oligomers are complementary to the upstream and downstream sequences bracketing said region.

13. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said target nucleic acid is double-stranded and said first and second oligomers form triplexes with said upstream and downstream sequences bracketing said region.

14. (original): The method of claim 8, which is performed simultaneously on a multiplicity of target nucleic acids, using a multiplicity of identification probes having particulate

labels of differing hues for each known sequence targeted coupled to oligomers with different specificities according to the sequences targeted.

15. (original): The method of claim 8, wherein said target nucleic acid of known sequence is derived from an organism.

16. (original): The method of claim 15, wherein the organism is an infectious agent.

17. (original): The method of claim 15, wherein the organism is a human subject.

18-47. (canceled)